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ESSAY

On the USE of

BLISTERS.

Wherein is clearly shewed, How in those Cases where *Blisters* are usually prescrib'd, *viz.* For *Sore Eyes*, *Head-achs*, *Fevers*, *Tooth-achs*, *Swell'd Faces*, &c. The Effects and Ends of a BLISTER may be fully Answer'd, without making one, or any Breach of the Skin, Pain or Trouble at all.

The Second Edition.

This BOOK is Given GRATIS.

Up one pair of Stairs at the Sign of the Celebrated Anodyne *NECKLACE* for Childrens TEETH without *Temple-Bar*.

At the *Crown* a Milleners Shop, right against the King's-Arms Tavern by *Hungerford-Market* in the *Strand*.

At Mrs. *Garway*'s Shop at the Sign of the *King's-Arms* at the *Royal-Exchange-Gate*, next *Cornhill*.

At the *Wheat-Sheaf* in the *Old-Baily*.

And by the AUTHOR, an Apothecary, at the *Unicorn* on *St. Margaret's-Hill*, in the Borough of *SOUTHWARK*; who Prepares and Furnishes Medicines for *Sea* or *Land*, by Wholesale or Retail.

Also Chymical Preparations.

London, Printed by *H. Parker*, in *Goswell-Street*, 1718.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE.

WHEN a Person offers any Remedy to the World, He ought to be very cautious and well assur'd of it's Virtues and Efficacy before he Publishes it. Now what this Plaister is recommended for, I do assure the World, I have for many Years, to my Credit and Satisfaction, fully Experienc'd; and therefore Recommend it instead of a Blister in the following Ailments and Distempers; viz. Pains, Swimings, Dizyness *in the* Head *and* Vapours; Red, Bloodshot, Weak, *or* Sore Eyes, *proceeding from any* Defluxion *of* Humours, Difficulty *of* Hearing, Chin *or* Hooping Cough *in* Children, Sore Throat, Pain *in the* Teeth, Gums *or* Ears, Swell'd Faces, *or* Scrophulous Swellings *in the* Neck *proceeding from the* Kings-Evil, *&c. But more especially for Pains in the Head, or Sore-Eyes, those who try it will soon be convinced of its Efficacy.*

Now altho' the Use and Application of Blistering Plaisters have been establish'd by a long and ancient Practice, yet could but People have as much Benefit in the same Ailements and Distempers, where they are commonly made use of without them, 'tis certain no Person would suffer themselves to be in a manner FLEAD ALIVE, *or that one Blister Plaister would ever*

ever be again applied or made use of, for the following Reasons.

First, *The great Pain and Torment the Party suffers in the Operation.*

Secondly, *The frequent* STRANGURIES, BLOODY URINE *and Pains in making Water caused by the Application of Blistering Plaisters; the Reasons whereof are shewn hereafter.*

Lastly, *Those Mortifications which so frequently happen from the Use of Blistering Plaisters to the endangering Persons Lives: For which Reasons, and to prevent any such Accidents for the future, I here Recommend this excellent Plaister, whose Design in most Cases is to answer the Intentions of a Blister, without making one, or even any Breach of the Skin, or giving any Inconvenience, Pain, or Trouble at all.*

AN

ESSAY

on the USE of

BLISTERS, &c.

CHAP. I.

Of Cantharides *or* Spaniſh Flies: *How and in what manner they produce their Effects, and are Injurious to a Human Body.*

IN order to account more eaſily for the pernicious Effects of *Cantharides*, or *Spaniſh-Flies*, we muſt firſt take notice of ſome few Obſervations from the Anatomical Diſſection of this Inſect.

The CANTHARIS, or *Spaniſh Fly* (as it is commonly called) is a ſort of Fly of a Golden greeniſh Luſtre, produced from a little Worm like a Caterpillar, and are very plentifully found in the Southern Parts of *France*, as *Provence*, and *Languedoc*, from whence the Shops are ſupplied with them.

By the help of a *Microſcope* in the Diſſection *of this Inſect* (which [as a learned and ingenious Gen-

Gentleman, Fellow of the *Royal Society*, and a Physician of the first Rank, in his Judgment, as well as Practice in Physick, says, in his Discourse of the Operation of a Blister before the *Royal Society*, related in the *Philosophical Transactions* No. 252] has set all the Physick in Town in a Ferment and Combustion) not only its Body, but even every the smallest and most minute Joint of it, appears to be armed with vast numbers of little pungent sharp fine pointed Bristles, Spears or Darts, not much unlike the Leaf of a *Nettle*, which will sting and make to tingle any tender part it does but even so much as lightly Touch.

Next we must consider the Nature of those *Parts* of the Body these Insects are applied to, and work upon; from all which will plainly appear, how it happens that from the Application of them in a Blister to the Neck, Arms or other parts of the Body, their pernicious Effects on parts so remote as the Bladder, and Urinary Vessels are produced. Since therefore, as has been said, these Flies consist of parts very pungent and stimulating, by consequence wherever they are applied, they will cause by their pungency and irritation upon the Nervous *Papillæ* of the Cutis that lies immediately under the Scarf Skin, (when once entered thro' the Pores of the Cuticula) a very great Heat, and by consequence a most violent Ferment of the finer Lymphatick Juices and Serum therein contained. And being always applied with something that is Oily, Mucilaginous, and Gummy, 'tis to be supposed that these Gummy, Glutinous, Emplastick Bodies, after the Intromission of the pungent Particles of the Flies, clog and stop up the Pores of the outward Skin, and thereby prevent the Serum separated by the

Glands of the Cutis underneath, from being freely discharged thro those Pores: The Serum being thus hindred from evaporating is condensed and collected under the *Cuticula*, for by the heat which the pungent Particles cause on the Part, the Humours are so rarified under the Scarf Skin, as to be separated and collected together much faster then usual; and not finding a passage for Transpiration thro' the Pores, (by reason of their being as just now has been said, stopt and clog'd up by the oily Mucilaginous Body of the Emplaster the Flies are mixed with) and being also thus separated under the Cuticula, and not transpired or discharged, they raise and lift it up into a Bladder, and this is what is commonly called a BLISTER. Now the Particles of these Flies being extraordinary sharp pointed, and by consequence when once the Outward Skin is separated and raised up from the *Cutis*, or Skin that lies immediately next underneath, they there irritate and press upon the sensible Fibres and Nervous Papillæ in a very piercing violent manner, and thereby cause those great Smartings and Pains, which Persons who undergo the tormenting Operation of a Blister complain of.

From what has hitherto been said, it plainly appears how these pungent Particles should cause still much worse Effects, by penetrating even as far as the very Bladder. For since the Acute pointed Particles enter thro' the Skin, they presently mix themselves with the Blood with which they are carried and convey'd thro other Parts also of the Body, and among the rest at length to the Bladder, which being more tender, and less defended with native Mucous then the rest of the Body, is by consequence the more

Stung

Stung as it were with these Darts, by which means the minute Blood Vessels with which the Bladder abounds, are Torn even to the Evacuation of Blood along with the Urine, from whence proceed violent Smartings, Excoriations and Pains. And Dr. *Baynard* seem'd so sensible of the Truth of what is here asserted, that in his Treatise of *Cold Baths*, page 199. Speaking of Blisters, says, That they (speaking of *Spanish Flies*) act so according to the Nature of the Devil, that he believed *Old Beelzebub* that Prince of Flies to be nothing else but a great CANTHARID.

CHAP. II.

Of the first Use and Design of Blister Plaisters.

THE first who Invented and Used Blisters were the *Arabians*, and of them one *Oribasius* first found out the Virtue of *Cantharides*; and the Use they made of them was by the violent Pain they put Persons to, to rouse them out of Lethargies; but in other Cases they never made use of them, they soon discovering the very ill Consequences and Symptoms that ensued. And even Modern Physicians using them in other Cases, as in *Fevers*, &c. have experienced the Effects of them to be very pernicious to the Patient. From which it evidently appears, That all those Perpetual drawing Plaisters and Ointments (for the making *perpetual Blisters*,) that have had such a Run of late Years, and make such a Noise in the World are really no better then PERPETUAL TORMENTS; all of them having SPANISH FLIES in their Composition, which, be-

ſides the Separation they make of the Cuticle from the Skin, breaking by their aculeated Particles and Stimulating Salts (with which theſe Flies ſo vaſtly abound) thro' it's Texture, and Tearing the Lymphatick Veſſels, mixing venomous Effluvias with the Blood, frequently cauſe Stranguries, Bloody Urine, and intolerable Pain in making Water, and ſometimes Mortification of the Part, as before mentioned. Beſides, it is allowed by Phyſicians, that Bliſtering Plaiſters are ſeldom or never ſafely applied to Women with Child, nor to other Women (at certain times) without pernicious Conſequences, from the ſtrong Agitations produced by them. And the Great *Baglivius*, Chief Profeſſor of Anatomy in *Rome*, in his Treatiſe *De Uſu & Abuſu Veſicantium*, Chap. 2. §. 1. expreſsly forbids the Uſe of Bliſters to Perſons who have oreverh ad any thing of the *Venereal Diſeaſe*, for, ſays he, Such Perſons are almoſt certain to receive very great Damage from Bliſters, let them be Sick of what Diſtempers they will.

An Obſervation worthy to be taken Notice of by a great many Perſons.

NOW this Plaiſter I here propoſe, may be applied to, and worn by Perſons of all Ages, Sexes, and Conſtitutions at any Time or Seaſon: It may be worn even in time of Labour, IT being ſo Innocent and yet ſo Powerful, that it performs what Bliſters are applied for, without any Pain or Torment, and has not one *Spaniſh Fly* in it: But on the contrary, is compoſed of ſuch Homogene Ingredients, whoſe extraordinary Specifick Qualities bear a ſingular Influence over Humours and Rheums which afflict the Head and Brain, and whoſe volatil Steams and ſubtle Effluvias proceeding from a par-

particular Texture and Activity of Parts, do ſo rarify and attenuate the fixed Morbifick Humours, as to render them Fluxile, Thin and Vaporous, which before were fixed and ſettled on the ailing Part, and conſequently over-come them, partly by Diſcuſſing, and partly by cauſing them to Tranſpire thro' the Pores and Glandules of the Skin in greater or leſſer Quantities, by diverting the Humour from the afflicted Part. Its way of Operation being by opening and enlarging the Pores, thro' which it makes a diſcharge of any Rheum, Humour, or Defluxion, by intercepting, diverting, and turning it off from the diſtemper'd Part, to the exteriour Pores and Glandules of the Skin, thro which by means of this Plaiſter, it is diſcharged and turn'd off, as Nature is diſpoſed for the Action, and the Conſtitution of the Patient will admit, its manner of Acting being conformable to the Temper and Diſpoſition of the Subject 'tis applied to; ſome Perſons having thicker Skins, cloſer Pores, and abounding leſs with *Serum*, *Moiſture* and *Humours*, and thoſe even thicker too; and conſequently leſs fit to be diſcharged than others, from whence on ſome Perſons, it ſhall only have a kind of *Dew* on it, as in the Caſe of the Young Nobleman hereafter mentioned; when on Others IT will be all WET, even to the wetting of a Napkin ſeveral times double, from the large quantity of *Serum*, which by its peculiar ATTRACTIVE QUALITY the Glandules of the Skin ſtrain out thro' the Pores, as a CONTINUAL DRAIN of all Noxious Humours offending the *Head*, *Eyes*. &c. Whereas a Bliſter is only for a few Days, and not without very great Pain.

I shall conclude this Chapter with Dr. *Garencière's* Words of the so very Dangerous and Poysonous quality and Use of Blistering Plaisters, that they ought to be exterminated out of the number of Remedies, *viz.* "Away then with those dangerous Things, *says he*, (*meaning Blister Plaisters*) "more pernicious many times than the Disease "it self; and let us turn our Practice to a "more safe and noble way, which will be both "*Tutiùs* & *Iucundiùs*.

CHAP. III.

Of the Texture, Nature, and Fabrick of the Parts where Blister Plaisters are applied.

IN the Anatomical Dissection of the fleshy Part of a Human Body, the first thing that represents it self to our view, is, the Cuticula or Scarf Skin; it sticks close to the Surface of the true Skin, to which it is supposed to be tied, as also to be nourished by its Vessels, tho so very small as to be altogether imperceptible to a naked Eye, unless assisted by a Microscope; it is this outward Scarf Skin which rises in Blisters upon the Application of *Spanish Flies* according to the manner beforementioned. The whole seems to be nothing else but an infinite number of exceeding small Scales one upon another, as if glewd together, whose use is to defend the true Skin from Pain by being too sensibly touched upon.

Immediately under this upper Skin lies the Cutis or true Skin which abounds with a vast number of small Glands, by means of which the Power and Efficacy of the Plaister hereafter mentioned is communicated to the Part. So that by these Glands as, by

by ſo many ſecretory Ducts, the Morbifick Humour is drawn out, and evacuated, juſt in the ſame manner as we ſee in the Eruption of Sweat.

Theſe Glands upon rubbing the Part, are forced to expand and open themſelves, and thereby give way the better for a more plentiful Evacuation of the Morbifick Humour by this Plaiſter; and for which reaſon it is, that always before it is laid on, the Cure will be much better and ſooner performed, if the Part be well chaff'd and rubbed, as plainly will appear from the viſible large Secretion of Serum upon the Surface of the Part, whenever the Plaiſter is taken of.

CHAP. IV.

Several Inſtances of Cures perform'd by this Plaiſter.

A Young Nobleman having catch'd a violent Cold, which ſo fixed on the Optick Nerves, as very much to have empaired his Sight; after ſeveral things tried to no purpoſe: the Lady Dowager his Mother ſent for me, to know if my Plaiſter would be of any Benefit to the Young Lord; I anſwer'd, It had performed very great Cures, and would do no harm, if it did no good: I did indeed Adviſe letting Blood in the Cephalick Vein, (he being young, and his Blood Hot, Bleeding being often very aſſiſtant, and forwards a Cure when 'tis Indicated from a Plethory, or fulneſs of Blood, and done by Judicial Advice) and which was immediately done: At Night, going to Bed, I applied one of my Plaiſters: The next Morning by Eight of the Clock he ſent for me: I waited on the Lady up to his Chamber; and as ſoon as we were entred the Room

Room, his own Words were, *Madam, I See as well, and as ſtrong as ever I did in my Life*; and he never took or did any thing afterwards; being compleatly cured in leſs than 12 Hours, which is the uſual Time that a Bliſter Plaiſter lies on, and all which time it is a Drawing, before it is CUT; and it very often happens that even at the 12 Hours end it is laid on again, not being then fit to CUT. *Note*, In this Cure no more then a Dew appeared upon the Plaiſter.

A young Child had a large long white Swelling under its Chin, in ſhape and bigneſs of a Penny-Brick-Loaf, and hung down on the Child's Boſom: One or two eminent Phyſicians view'd it, and ſeveral able Surgeons, who were of Opinion that it was Scrophulous, and proceeded from the *Kings-Evil*: The Mother was much ſurpriz'd, and ſent for me to know if one of my Plaiſters would Cure her Child, I told her I would not promiſe any thing: But as ſhe knew what UNCOMMON CURES it had done, ſhe might try one if ſhe pleas'd; whereupon I forthwith applied one to the Child's Neck, and in ſix Hours time a thin ſerous Liquor began to evacuate it ſelf through the Pores, which flow'd in ſuch a large Quantity, that they were oblig'd to ſhift five or ſix Napkins a Day. And without any other Application or Medicine the Child was cured.

A young Lady for more than two Years had a continual Head-ach; and by the Uſe of One of theſe Plaiſters and no other Remedy was cured.

A Gentlewoman in Years came out of the *North* in very cold Weather; who coming by Sea, catched ſuch a violent Cold, with ſuch a ſharp Defluxion of Humors, which empaired her Eye-ſight ſo much, that ſhe was obliged to have one to lead

lead her: I meeting her in the Street thus Led along, they told me that they were going to a Physician, with whom I being intimately acquainted, they desired I would go with them to him; I did so, and the Physician told the Gentlewoman, that in consideration of her great Age, she being above Fourscore, he would have her go home and keep warm; and as the Season advanc'd, he would do his utmost to serve her. Away they went: But the next Morning betimes comes a Relation of the Gentlewoman's to my House for one of these Plaisters, having heard of some notable Cures perform'd by it in their Neighbourhood: The Person had one indeed, but at the same time I told her, that I could not promise any great Success from it, considering the great Age of the Person, and sharpness of the Weather, it being in a very Frosty Season. However, in eight Days I had Notice, that in 48 Hours she could see to read a large Print, and mended every Day while she stay'd in *London*, which was some time, and then return'd to the *North*.

A considerable Gentleman of the City, near 70 Years of Age, who had one of these Plaisters applied to him for a continual Head-ach, which he had suffer'd for a long time; and in less than 48 Hours the Pain was abated, and in three Days perfectly cured, without any other assistance, having before the Use of this Plaister had the Advice of a Physician, and more than one Apothecary.—— *Note*, That notwithstanding this Gentleman's great Age, there was a very great discharge of Rheum, which trickled down his Back, so long as the Pain endur'd after the Application of the Plaister.

I Thomas Wharton, *at the* Olive-Tree, *over against the* Bear Tavern, *near the* New Exchange *in the* Strand, *do hereby Certifie, that my Child was perfectly cured of very bad Sore Eyes, by the Use of one of these Excellent Plaisters, which I bought in the* Strand. *Witness my Hand* May 8. 1718.

Thomas Wharton.

Mr. *James Emmot*, Master of the Brush-Shop in the same House, having had Red Weak Sore Eyes, so very bad that he could scarce See to work at his Trade, bought one of these Excellent Plaisters and was perfectly Cured in 12 Hours; as he will readily satisfie any Person that will Enquire of him.

From these few Instances of the success of this Plaister here mentioned, I desire my Reader to take Notice, That there were several different *Sorts* of Cures of diverse Ailments and Distempers performed by it, which, as has been said before, has not one *Spanish Fly* in its Composition; and therefore none of those Ill Consequences can be apprehended from its Use, as are Customary in the Use of Blisters. For even some Persons, by only carrying *Spanish Flies* about them, have made Bloody Urine. And Mr. *Boyle* takes Notice, That by the frequent Use of Blistering Plaisters, BLINDNESS has ensued.

CHAP. V.

Of the great Advantage of this Plaister, and where it is to be had.

THE Design of this excellent Plaister being to save and prevent the troublesome and painful Operation of a Blister; 'tis easy to judge the

the great advantage and convenience of it. For indeed who (in any Ailment whatſoever) would have a Bliſter, that can be cured without? And obſerve, that this Plaiſter does very often perform a Cure (and without any Pain at all) in as little time as a Bliſter is Drawing, and Riſing, and fit only for CUTTING; as in the Caſe of the young Nobleman above-mention'd.

I do therefore recommend it as a Remedy, by which 19 out of 20 will find Eaſe and Benefit; and that is Recommendation enough: 'Tis a neat thing, of an agreeable Flavour, and ſo very eaſy in its Uſe, that any Perſon may go Abroad with it (even Ladies if they pleaſe) without being diſagreeable (for any Smell it has) to any Company: For, as has been ſaid before, IT anſwers the Intentions of a Bliſter, without making one, or even without making any breach of the Skin, or any Inconvenience, or Pain at all. Price neatly Spread, ready to lay on, 2 *s.* 6 *d.* And is to be had at the Places mentioned above in the Title-Page of this Book, and no where elſe.

This Plaiſter is likewiſe put up in neat Gally-Pots for the greater Convenience of ſending it into the Country at the ſame Price.

Any Charitable Ladies, Apothecarys, Surgeons, or others, who in the Country aſſiſt their Neighbours, may have Pound or Half-pound Pots of this Plaiſter at a very reaſonable Price, to ſpread ſome of it when they pleaſe.

F I N I S.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE AUTHOR *of this* Eſſay, *an Apothecary, at the* Unicorn *on* St. Margaret's-Hill, *in the* Borrough *of* Southwark; *Prepares and Furniſhes Medicines for* Sea *or* Land, *by Wholeſale or Retail.*

Alſo Chymical Preparations.